



## ARCH angels

**Nicola Thomas** physically sees the advantages of excellent eco-renovation

This week I thought I'd share with you an eco-renovation in a typical Victorian property in Hanover. The owner, Paul, wanted to reduce his energy and water consumption, making the house more comfortable and healthy to live in, together with using local natural materials wherever possible. Paul said: "I have always been interested in eco issues. It's just a natural extension of that."

So, what did we help him to achieve? Well, like many properties of this type, Paul's home was constructed from a solid wall construction, brick with cement render, which can allow heat to escape.

External insulation, behind the lime render to front and rear walls, dramatically reduces this heat loss without affecting the size and space of the inside of the property. Paul also used high levels of insulation, made of recycled newspaper in the floor and sheep's wool in the roof.



### An eco success

Have a look at this thermal image, it shows the reduction in heat lost from Paul's finished property compared to the house next door. New timber windows and doors, with high-spec double glazing, were fitted to replace the existing, poor quality uPVC windows. Paul also wanted to convert the loft. Understandably, he didn't want all the upheaval of two projects so it was important that the room in the roof and eco-renovation were completed at the same time. We designed a dormer, clad in locally produced sweet chestnut, with solar panels on the roof and a Cabrio Velux window looking out on to the city below.



So what is the return on Paul's investment of approximately £35,000? As well as gaining an additional room, by using low-energy appliances and generating his own energy through solar panels, Paul estimates that he has reduced his gas and electricity bills by around 50%. The house has a more consistent temperature and whereas before was prone to damp patches and drafts, these are a thing of the past. Not only that, but Paul's efforts were recognised when he was awarded the greenest household in Sussex at the 2008 Argus Eco-Awards.

If you have a similar property and a desire for eco living call us for an informal chat and let us help you realise your dream!



*Richard Zinman and Nicola Thomas are founders of ARCH angels Architects, a local, Brighton-based approachable practice specialising in environmentally conscious and cost effective architecture. We work closely with you to maximise your space and provide beautiful buildings.*

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